

# **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

## **COUNCIL BLUFFS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

Administered by the  
Community Development Department  
(Amended 11-8-04)



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209 Pearl Street  
Council Bluffs, IA 51503  
712/328-4629

# **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This Citizen Participation Plan (the “Plan”) is a requirement of the Consolidated Plan process outlined in 24 CFR 91.105 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and its amendments. The Plan sets forth the steps the City shall provide for and encourage citizens to participate in the development and any substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan and the development of the Annual Performance Report.

The Consolidated Plan and each year’s Annual Action Plan guide the City’s use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership (HOME), American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) and other federal funds which are made available from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Annual Performance Report provides an assessment of the funds expended and a quantitative analysis of the program for project outcomes. The entire Consolidated Plan process shall be integrated into the City’s overall yearly goal-setting and budget process and shall provide for citizen access designed to encourage participation by groups most directly effected during the Consolidated Plan process, as well as the general public.

## **II. ENCOURAGEMENT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The City intends to allow and encourage all citizens to be involved during the Consolidated Plan process, with opportunities to express views on housing and community development needs and to participate in planning, reviewing and assessing actions to meet those needs proposed and performed by the City and to be informed prior to the time of any official action by the City Council. In particular, to include low and moderate income persons, particularly those living in slum and blight areas; low and moderate income neighborhoods; minorities; non-English speaking persons; persons with disabilities; residents of public and assisted housing developments; and residents of targeted revitalization areas in which developments are located. Also, to ensure that those groups most directly effected during the Consolidated Plan process are represented, citizen participation will be accomplished by, but not limited to, the following methods:

- a. Communicating with housing, emergency shelter and transitional housing organizations and community agencies that serve lower income clientele, minorities, non-English speaking persons and persons with mobility, visual or hearing impairments;
- b. Communicating with nonprofit organizations, public agencies and other interested parties;

- c. Encouraging, in conjunction with the City of Council Bluffs Community Development Department, the participation of public housing residents and assisted housing developments;
- d. Advertising meeting(s)/hearing(s) in The Daily Nonpareil; and
- e. Ensuring that all citizens wishing to submit their view be offered an opportunity.

In addition, the City will provide information to the Municipal Housing Authority of Council Bluffs about the Consolidated Plan process so that the housing agency can make this information available at its annual public hearing.

### **III. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Community Development Advisory Committee (the “Advisory Committee”) shall monitor the Consolidated Plan process and shall ensure that the Plan is followed by the City. The Advisory Committee will serve as a forum for receiving public comments and providing information to the public on the development or substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan and the development of the Annual Performance Report. The Advisory Committee shall work with the Community Development Department and other appropriate City Boards, Commissions and Councils in the development of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. Further, the Advisory Committee may be utilized to provide comment and recommendations on other community development related programs.

### **IV. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

In order to provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the Citizen Participation Plan and on substantial amendments to the Plan, the Advisory Committee will hold at least one public hearing, as outlined in Section VIII of this Plan. The Plan and substantial amendments to the Plan shall be adopted by Resolution of the City Council following the review and recommendation of the Advisory Committee. The Plan is available to the public and upon request, may be made available in a format accessible to persons with disabilities.

### **V. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND ANNUAL ACTION PLANS**

The Advisory Committee will hold a series of public meetings during the development of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan that would include identification of community housing and non-housing needs, prioritization of needs, strategy development to meet identified needs and budget recommendations to implement those strategies. Citizen participation opportunities, as identified in Section II of this Plan, shall be utilized to increase participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan.

The Advisory Committee shall hold at least one public hearing, as outlined in Section VIII of this Plan, prior to publication of a draft plan for comment and shall provide not less than a 30 day public comment period before final action. The Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plans shall be adopted by the Advisory Committee and forwarded to the Mayor. The City Council shall act on the proposed Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan. Adoption by Resolution of the City Council is required prior to submission to HUD.

A summary of the draft Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan shall be published in The Daily Nonpareil, and made available for citizen distribution, prior to the commencement of the 30 day public comment period. The complete document shall be available for public review at the Council Bluffs Public Library, the City Clerk's Office and the Community Development Department.

Any public comments received during the comment period or at the public hearings shall be summarized and attached to the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan prior to submission to HUD. This shall include a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore.

## **VI. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND ANNUAL ACTION PLANS**

The City will amend its approved Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan whenever it makes a decision to:

- a. Make a change in its allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds;
- b. Carry out an activity using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (including program income), not previously described in the Annual Action Plan; or
- c. Change the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.

The City will use the following criteria for determining what changes in the City's planned or actual activities constitute a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan:

- a. Change in the use of CDBG funds from one eligible activity to another.

A change in the entity responsible for carrying out an activity or a change in the location of a proposed project will not constitute a substantial amendment.

A public notice of the proposed substantial amendment will be published in The Daily Nonpareil and a public hearing will be held following the 30 day public comment period. The City will consider any comments or views received in writing, or orally at public

hearings, in preparing the substantial amendment. Substantial amendments shall be adopted by Resolution of the City Council after the review and recommendation of the Advisory Committee prior to submission to HUD. Any public comments received during the comment period or at the public hearing shall be considered and shall be summarized and attached to the substantial amendment prior to submission to HUD. This shall include a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore.

## **VII. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS**

This document includes a summary on the status of all community development activities funded by the City in the previous program year. The Annual Performance Report represents the annual evaluation of the local program. Notice of the Annual Performance Report availability will be published in The Daily Nonpareil and copies of the draft will be available for public review at the Council Bluffs Public Library, the City Clerk's Office and the Community Development Department.

Prior to submission to HUD, the Advisory Committee shall, following a 15-day public comment period hold a public hearing, as outlined in Section VIII of this Plan, on the Annual Performance Report. Any public comments received during the comment period or at the public hearing shall be considered and shall be summarized and attached to the Annual Performance Report.

## **VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Citizen involvement is an on-going function of the community development process. Meetings and public hearings will be held periodically throughout the year to advise the public about the program, to discuss planning and project proposals, and to solicit comments about community development policy.

A notice will be published in the legal section of The Daily Nonpareil and posted at City Hall not less than five (5) nor more than ten (10) days prior to the meetings or public hearings. Public hearing notices may also be sent to a listing of organizations and groups that represent the social, economic, neighborhood and business groups that may have an interest in the program. This listing will be developed by the Advisory Committee. Public hearing notices shall include sufficient information about the subject of the hearing to permit informed comment.

## **IX. MEETINGS**

The Community Development Department will schedule meetings at sites that are accessible. Special measures will be taken to assure an opportunity for involvement by low-income persons, the elderly, handicapped and disabled persons, minorities, and civic and business interests. Also, upon request, the Community Development Department shall provide interpretive services for non-English speaking and hearing impaired individuals and groups and shall provide informational handouts in foreign

languages. The arrangement and costs of such services shall be incurred by the Community Development Department. Any questions or requests for special accommodations or services for meetings should be directed, at least 48-hours in advance to the Community Development Department.

In addition to the scheduled public hearings, the Advisory Committee may hold other meetings as necessary to further their duties and responsibilities.

## **X. ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Citizens will be informed that comments are invited at the meetings or may be presented in writing. All written comments will be made available to the Advisory Committee. Comments and questions will be accepted throughout the year and should be addressed to: Director; Community Development Department; City Hall, 209 Pearl Street; Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503.

Citizens, public agencies and other interested parties including those most affected, shall be permitted the opportunity to receive information. Program records, files, and information are confidential to the extent provided by Chapter 68A of the Code of Iowa. Information not protected by this chapter, or otherwise specified by federal regulations to be public information, will be made available upon request.

All component documents which make up the content of the Community Development Program in Council Bluffs, including but not limited to: the Consolidated Plan; the Annual Action Plan; Annual Performance Report; and neighborhood or special project plans will be available for public viewing in the Community Development Department. All written comments on any of these documents, received by the Director of the Department, will be responded to in writing in not less than fifteen (15) working days from the date of receipt. All comments and copies of the response will be placed in the appropriate contract file in the Department.

## **XI. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The Community Development Department staff will provide technical assistance and support to any organizations or groups which may request it, in particular to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income. That assistance may be limited to activities that are directly associated with the Community Development Program. Specific assistance may be provided in the planning, development, and implementation of projects or activities. The staff may also assist in preparing proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

Department staff members will be available on request to meet with any organization or group to discuss the policies, projects, or activities of the Community Development Program. Such meetings are encouraged to: 1) provide program and policy information; 2) share comments; and 3) answer questions about community issues.

## **XII. OBJECTIONS AND COMPLAINTS**

If a citizen wishes to make a complaint or grievance about any matter relating to the Community Development Program, including the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Annual Performance Report and amendment processes, they may do so by writing to: Director; Community Development Department; City Hall, 209 Pearl Street; Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503. All letters of complaint will be responded to within fifteen (15) working days after receipt.

Citizens may contact HUD directly if they wish to object to any part of the Community Development Program, or if they feel that they have been aggrieved by any program, activity, or procedure funded through the Community Development Program. Such objections should be made to: Director; Community Planning and Development Division; Department of Housing and Urban Development; Omaha Office, Region VII; Executive Tower Centre; 10909 Mill Valley Road; Omaha, Nebraska 68154-3955.